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No. 414

HOME.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Without, the night is chill and cold;

Within the fire is bright,
And shelter red in home's happy fold

We dread no storm to-night.

We see the white snow falling fast,

We hear the wild winds shriek,

But listening to the mournful blast,

A smile is on each cheek.

But, ah, this dreary winter night,

How many wanderers roam,

Who shiver at the wind's delight

And know no place for home.

God pity all the homeless ones,

Wherever they may roam,

And grant them, all their wanderings done,

A place in God's dear home.

Happy Jack and Pard;

OR,

The White Chief of the Sioux.

A ROMANCE OF SPORTS AND PERILS OF POST AND PLAIN.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

CHAPTER I.

A FRONTIER FESTIVAL.

"MAKES a fellow just sorry for the old Indian fashion, eh, pard'r," can't say as I ever hankered after the 'winning' critters—they're mostly generally had medicine in 'em, they are. A many lodges big enough to hold them an' luck, too, to *my* notion; but when I fast lay eyes on *her*, I had to fight mighty hard inside myself to keep from snatching her up an' makin' a tail-on-end race fer it—I did so!"

"There's another man who thinks much the same, or his eyes speak false," quietly remarked the young man addressed, with a slight nod toward the small, flag-draped platform or pavilion. "He must be a new-comer, for I never saw him before."

"They ain't many men as care to see him twice. Take a good squar' look an' see what you kin make out from his face."

The speakers—who are destined to figure prominently in this chronicle—were standing a little apart from the main gathering, and both were men who would attract attention in any crowd, though strong contrasts in nearly every respect.

The first speaker was scarcely of medium height; his limbs were small, but admirably rounded, and though at first glance he seemed almost effeminate, his strength, activity and wonderful skill in almost every species of athletics had long since passed into a proverb. His features were clear-cut and regular, and would have been fairly handsome only for the high cheekbones. His face was smooth and beardless, though the hair of his head was unusually heavy, falling in straight black masses below his shoulders. His eyes, though rather small, were wonderfully bright and keen, and few men could meet them fairly without an uncomfortable feeling of being read through and through.

His garments were almost severely plain, of Indian tanned buck-skin, and minus all the fringes and beadings most men of his class are so fond of. Even his weapons were unornamented. Yet one object about him shone and sparkled in the sunlight: a beautifully-embroidered and ornamented pouch hung upon his breast—a "medicine-sack."

Such was William—or "BILL COMSTOCK," the scout and guide. His career, though briefer, was no less famous than that of Wild Bill or Buffalo Bill, and to this day many a rough voice grows soft, many a hard eye dims, as the memory of the hearted scout is recalled to mind. "True as steel to a friend—bitter as death to an enemy, he died in harness, nobly performing his duty; and now lies in a nameless grave. Peace to his ashes!"

His companion—known far and wide as "Happy Jack"—was rising six feet, broad-shouldered, full-chested, with a round, compact waist, swelling hips and long limbs; a model of strength and symmetry. His complexion was fair, his features almost classically regular, his eyes large and deep blue. A heavy mustache shaded his lips, while a magnificent chevelure hung in yellow curls to his shoulders. His dress, like that of his partner, was mainly of buck-skin, and bore traces of recent hard riding and rough living.

"Unless my eyes deceive me," he said, after a steady gaze in the direction indicated by Comstock, "that man is what you rarely see—a brave tyrant! God help the man—the woman—whose only hope is in *his* mercy!"

"I knowed you'd seen me," cracked the scout, softly. "That's Captain Stone, of the—tho' he led his men such a dog's life that his friends managed to get him changed to this raiment. I don't know he'd a' lived through the next skirmish—indeed, the boys didn't make no secret of it, but said right out that he'd die from ahind, the very first chaine that come."

"He doesn't look like a man who would run from even such a danger," thoughtfully said Happy Jack.

"No more he would—without a fa' cause," grinned Comstock, nodding toward the pavilion.

"To do him justice, they ain't a more dare-devil man, nur a better Injun-fighter than him. But *thar's* the little gal kin take him into camp!"

"I feel sorry for *her*," was the scout's only reply.

The subject of this brief conversation was seated beside a lady near the upper end of the pavilion. Bill, well proportioned, dark and handsome, a finely-educated man with rare conversational powers. Captain Lawrence Stone was laying himself out to please the young lady beside him with an interest and ardor that he made no attempt to disguise from the eyes of those around. Indeed, so impressive did his air become that the lady arose and hastily approached the edge of the pavilion nearest the crowd. Captain Stone followed, a hot flush passing swiftly across his brow.

The unpolished though sincere praise of the scout had not been unfounded. Kate Markham, daughter of the colonel commanding, was indeed a beautiful woman. That she was barely up to



"That's enough, pard!" cried Happy Jack. "You mean well, but I don't need any man to fight my battles."

convince you at any time or place you may choose to name. Meanwhile, if you have any doubts, you can settle them by one word with Colonel Markham. Here is the money—cover it, over that you are talking just for the sake of hearing your own voice."

"You have said more than enough," replied Captain Stone, in a voice that trembled despite his iron nerves. "Lieutenant Blake, will you do us the honor to hold stakes? Thanks. I trust you are satisfied?" he added, abruptly turning to Happy Jack.

"Perfectly," bowed the scout.

"I hope you may be able to say as much by this time to-morrow," and with a little laugh the captain strode away toward the pavilion.

"You've stirred up an ugly devil, pard," earnestly said Comstock, as they turned away from the little crowd. "He's giv' his rattle; he'll wait long to have strikin'!"

"I mean the *gentleman* with the golden curls—yes," replied Kate, with a provoking emphasis.

"That is Happy Jack, as men call him, a sort of scout, or camp-follower, I believe. I fear though, Miss Kate, that few would recognize him here simply to pick a quarrel."

"Indeed! after such a proof of your blindness, I shall think twice before believing any more of your pretty speeches. Without exception he is the handsomest man I have seen in a year—and I'm going to ask papa for an introduction."

"I reckon he couldn't come to a better place gettin' the full wuth o' his money," grinned Comstock.

"I'll do my best to satisfy him, at least. But now—about this bet; what is the saddle offered for?"

"The old trick—you remember the fun we had down Taos way? Pluckin' the cock—el gallo."

"Old 'Paint' will do, then," muttered the scout, glancing toward a curiously-spotted mustang, "but good now. I wouldn't like to trust 'em, though. He did not crowd us like for nothing. I can't imagine his reasons, but I feel that he came here simply to pick a quarrel."

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don't want you to get into trouble on my account."

"I don't often cut into 'mother teller's' pie but—you'll just laugh at me as you've done afore—I tell you, pard, it's 'tough' to me!" I knew it the first time I saw you talkin' to him, I knowed thar'd be a difficulty; I saw a blood a'ween ye—the heart's blood of one o' ye. I know you don't take no stock in such things; but I've seen 'em proved, time an' ag'in, an' I never read the *medicine* wrong yet! Ef I was to ax it as a favor, wouldn't you war this? touching the gayly embroidered pouch upon his breast.

"And leave you defenseless against witches and spooks? No, pard; I know you are in sober earnest, and I thank you, but at the same time you must let me go my own way. Only—I will not take any step toward settlement with this gentleman."

"Good enough! We'll let it go at that. An' now—I reckon you hain't forgot the good old greased style? Brace up, an' show these blue-coats how a true mountain man kin put on the givewine style! Yender she is, a-lookin' straight this-a-way, to see which one o' us is the pusiest!"

Happy Jack glanced toward the pavilion, and a faint flush tinged his cheeks as he saw Kate Markham, seated beside her parent, but with her bright eyes unmistakably dwelling upon himself. Acting upon an impulse, he cracked several long feathers from his pocket back into the bushes, and, separating, began sweeping around in a circle, keeping directly opposite each other, and divided by about fifty yards of space. As in the game of *el gallo*, Happy Jack rode in strict Indian fashion, while Comstock used saddle and bridle. The former bore a long, straight, well-tempered scabbard; the latter his revolvers, while a small round Indian shield of buffalo-hide was upon his left arm.

At a swift, steady gallop the horses circled around, then Happy Jack suddenly disappeared behind his steed's body. The spectators heard a sharp *twang*, and an arrow flashed from deadly force direct at Comstock's heart. One moment later the scout's pistol spoke sharply. As he circled around, facing the crowd, a loud cheer arose as they saw the feathered shaft quivering deep in the hair-stuffed shield. Again and again came the twang of the taut bowstring, answered by a sharp peep lookin' gal" muttered the stranger, following Kate's graceful motions with a strangely intent gaze. "I reckon they lied when they said she was gwinne to ride in the race this afternoon?"

"Eyes open, pard!" hastily muttered Comstock. "That's a snarke around!" and he slightly nodded his head toward the figure of Captain Stone, who was slowly approaching them.

Happy Jack arose to his feet as the officer paused before him. Though unusually pale, the captain had lost all trace of his mad rage and mortification, and when he spoke his voice was calm and even.

"Will you favor me with half a dozen words in private, Mr. —?"

"You can call me Happy Jack, captain. As for the rest, I am entirely at your service. Gentlemen, will you oblige us?"

With one warning glance, Comstock turned away, together with the stranger, but though he passed beyond ear-shot, he kept close enough to witness all that transpired.

"I know what you anticipate," said Stone, quietly; "but that is not my object just at present. I was obliged to pass my word to Colonel Markham, or else be placed under guard. I did pledge it, for this one day. I see you understand me. There is no need of

you to ask the first sight of your face, and I know that you do not exactly love me. I am once. I ask another chance. You have a noble horse, and I have another. I challenge you to ride against me this afternoon. If I lose, you may name the forfeit; if I win, I will claim the same right. Do you agree?"

"To ride the race? yes; but I prefer that the stakes be named beforehand," quietly responded Happy Jack. "As you know, I am a simple scout, and my pay—"

"What I ask will not break you," interrupted Stone, with a harsh, forced laugh. "It is a mere fancy of mine that knot of ribbons upon your breast."

"I thought as much! No, Captain Stone, you haven't wealth enough to stake against this, even though you flung your own life in the balance against it."

"A noble guardian for a lady's favor!" sneered the officer. "The ribbon should have been snow-white, to match the heart it covers!"

"You have said more than enough, Captain Stone," sternly uttered the scout. "Hands are tied here, but repeat those words to-morrow, and I will cram them down your lying throat!"

"You shall have the chance—then it is agreed?" he added, in a changed tone, as he caught sight of Colonel Markham hastening toward the spot. "Colonel, you will be witness? This gentleman and I have agreed to run our horse to the post to take both."

The shriek was heard, and cries of wondering surprise came from the hunting-party. Turning his head, the stranger uttered a long, ringing yell, then rode swiftly on.

A prolonged echo came from the hills; then from the south, a single, dashing horseman, followed by another, another—yelling and hooting, flourishing rifles and lances, riding straight toward the almost defenseless fort.

"To accept the wager you have fairly won?" said Stone, his cheek flushing.

"If you will allow me. The honor of defeating such an animal is ample reward."

"Give me room—stand aside there," harshly cried Stone, as he wheeled the black and led him a few yards distant.

Then, before any one could divine his purpose, he thrust a revolver against the poor brute's ear, and fired. The horse fell dead, with scarcely a struggle, and Captain Stone strode swiftly to the fort, and disappeared within its gates.

Perhaps it was the wisest move he could make, for many were the not specifiable by the instant spectators of mortal death, and present fact of the declaration that the popular brute of the two had suffered a fate far more befitting the other. Then the encrass was dragged away, and the regular races began. Neither of the two scouts entered, but the stranger did, and once more he astonished the natives. His gaunt, big-boned, crooked-limbed horse showed a turn of speed that astonished all, and its ungainly rider exhibited a specimen of jockeying that would have opened the eyes of many a professional rider. There were three heats, over the same course as that ridden by the two men; half a dozen men rode in each heat, and it was arranged that the winners of each heat were to run an extra course, to decide the first, second, and third prizes; but this was obviated by the stranger taking the three straight heats with apparent ease.

The old man seemed fairly wild with joy, and many were the wonderful tales he told of Ebenezer, his horse, *could* do; nor had he concluded when the ladies reappeared, ready mounted for the concluding sport of the day. Two powerful greyhounds were held in leash, while a couple of soldiers, each bearing a box trap, ran out upon the level plain, pausing some two hundred yards in advance. Each trap contained a full-grown "jack rabbit"—the prairie substitute for a fox.

Kate Markham was mounted upon a clean-bred, fleet little steed, and, bewitchingly charming, she looked in the saddle—as Happy Jack caught himself acknowledging. Close beside him rode the forlorn-looking gelding, who had acted as the old man's target. The stranger, himself, kept well in the crowd, his horse prancing and plunging like an overgrown colt.

Then the word was given—the traps were sprung; out leaped the "mules," and with the unleashed greyhounds in pursuit, darted away like two white-tailed comets. With a joyous, ringing "view halloo!" the excited riders spurred after, eager to be in at the death.

But not all. The big horse, ridden by the stranger, seemed to have taken a sudden disinclination to run, and began a series of prancings, directly in front of Kate, who was forced to stop. Happy Jack turned his head to aid her, when the savage had kept by his side, dealt him a furious blow upon the head that knocked him clean from the saddle, then hastened toward the maiden. At the same moment the stranger grasped her bridle-rein and urged her horse at right angles to the chase, heading direct for the hills, little more than a half-mile distant. Kate uttered a sharp cry of indignation, surprise, but before she could do more, the Indian was beside her and his strong hand held her forcibly in the saddle.

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(To be continued.)

THE SUNSHINE OF THE HEART.

TO M.

BY MARIE S. LADD.

Dear friend, I clasp your hand: The hand as tender as 'tis ever strong, And sit you by my fire, while you inspire My pen to write a cheerful winter song.

I know the earth is white, and very chill; A moment since, it seemed to me so drear That sun-birds and flowers came but with hours.

So far holding their wings we could not hear.

It grieves me I could not wait 'till the snows, And about the time of year when the snows come, Within this chilly hush, comes the first frost, But now it is as naught—the north-wind's breath!

Then 'tis not all the seasons that impress; Not winterly frosts, nor yet the summer dew; Not mountain gales, nor the soft air of vales; All days are bright, my friend, if spent with you!

Marian's Situation.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTON.

"It's very unfortunate! It was very thoughtless in poor Edward not to leave us better provided for. If he had only listened to me, now!" whimpers Mrs. Chester, giving her crapes a shake and applying her cambric handkerchief to her eyes.

"I suppose my brother thought he was using his means to the best advantage," answered Mr. Rufus Chester, who had come down to see what could be done for his brother's widow and daughters. And Mr. Chester mentally added: "If it had not been for you and your extravagance, madam, he would have died better off."

"We have the house left, mamma," said the younger daughter, sweet, brown-eyed Marian.

"Yes. But we can't eat the house, nor yet wear it, that I know of," returned Mrs. Chester, stiffly. "What are we to do for food and clothes is what I ask."

"I'm willing to do anything honest," said Marian.

"You'll have to do something, I suppose," said Uncle Rufus. "How about you, Bell?"

Miss Bell frowned dismally and, answered pettishly: "I don't know. I wasn't brought up to work."

"Ah, no! We didn't expect this!" sighed Mrs. Chester, again applying her cambric handkerchief.

"It has come, however," said Uncle Rufus, dryly. "And must be met somehow. What do you propose, Sister Harriet?"

"Ah, I can't propose anything!" sighed Mrs. Chester. "I'm too broken down. My poor girl! I never expected to see them come to that."

"We must take a practical view of the matter, Harriet," quietly returned Uncle Rufus. "I am willing to lend a helping hand in anything you propose."

"Why not take what little we have and start a fancy store! Bell and I could tend it!" cried Marian, eagerly, her bright eyes sparkling with enthusiasm.

"Oh, horrible! A little shopkeeper! I'd die first!" cried Bell, curving her red lips, scornfully.

And Mrs. Chester said:

"Marian, I'm surprised you could think of doing that."

While Uncle Rufus said not a word.

"But I must do something," persisted Marian. "Can't you teach, Bell?"

"No!" whined Bell. "I couldn't stand a dirty schoolroom and the horrid, noisy young ones."

"Music, then?" suggested Marian. "You play so well."

"I might take two or three scholars, if they came to me," replied Uncle Rufus, suddenly.

"What do you propose to do yourself, Marian?" said Uncle Rufus.

"Anything," was the prompt response. "But I would prefer some situation in the city, there are so many workers here already. Do you

know of anything I could do, uncle? Stay in a store, or a picture gallery, or sew for somebody? Why? I'd rather be a waiter-girl in a restaurant than be idle!"

Mrs. Chester and Bell both cried out in horror at Marian's bold declaration, but she only fought the harder for her right.

"I would! It's better than starving or being dependent on mamma! I'll do any honest work."

"Very well, since you are so willing you deserve success," said Uncle Rufus, rising to go. "I'll look about up-town, Marian, and find something for you to do. I'll let you know as soon as I hear of a situation."

"Oh, thank you, uncle! I'll be so glad if you will take that much trouble."

"It's no trouble, child. It is both my duty and my pleasure to help you. Well, Bell, shall I hunt up something for you, too?"

"No, I thank you, uncle. I have an invitation to spend the summer and travel with Mrs. Garnet, and I think I'll take it, though I don't like her. It may lead the way to better chances."

"Very well, please yourself," said Uncle Rufus, some what coldly, guessing that Bell's "better chances" meant making a rich match if she could, to escape from work.

"The man still sits old Cumberlidge! To offer to find us work when he has rolls of money, and not a soul to use it but himself and aunt Janet! I didn't expect anything less than his offering a home to at least one of us!"

"Oh, Bell, we couldn't go, if he did!" said Marian. "We couldn't be altogether dependent on him!"

"Couldn't we? Well, just let him offer me a room in that big house, and a finger in his pocket, and I'd see if one of us couldn't, any how!" retorted Bell, as she flounced off to her own room.

The mail that evening brought Marian a hasty note from Uncle Rufus. It ran thus:

"DEAR MARIAN:—I have found a situation which I think will just suit you. It is to be a sort of companion to an elderly lady in fact, who wishes to travel this summer—Niagara, White Mountain, and all that stuff—and cannot go alone. She is not hard, please, is rich, and you can name any salary you please. Situation open at once. If you accept, please, my traps and come by early train tomorrow. I will meet you at the ferry and take you to the place."

R. CHESTER."

"A sort of companion! A sort of servant-maid! Marian, you shan't stir one step!" cried Bell, when the note was read, her eyes flashing with anger.

"Shan't I?" said Marian, coolly. "I rather think I shall! Why, it's just what I longed and dared not hope for! To travel with an elderly lady!"

"She'll be old, and ugly as sin, and cross as forty bears!" cried Bell.

"Will she? Well, let her! I'm young and strong and good-natured! You can't scare me, Bell."

"But, Marian, think a minute! If I go with Mrs. Garnet, we shall be apt to meet at some of the watering-places. Think how I should feel to recognize her!—and yourself!"

"You needn't recognize me at all; I won't bother you," returned Marian, coolly. "Anyhow, you would be eating the bread-and-butter of dependence on a woman you despise, and I should be earning my own, so mine will be the sweetest. Oh! I'm going! I know my poor old lady needs somebody to be good to her, and I'm in a hurry to see her. And think, Bell!—the salary! I have so many nice clothes, I shall hardly need anything for a long time. I can send nearly all of it home to mamma! Won't that be nice?"

"I suppose you think so," returned Bell, ungraciously.

"Oh, indeed I do! I'm going straight to 'pack my traps' as Uncle Rufus says, and begin business to-morrow! I declare I am as happy as a queen!"

"You're a little fool," snapped Miss Bell, as Marian hastened away to her packing.

Uncle Rufus was on the look-out for Marian's bright face, in the throng which poured over the wharf from the early boat.

"I thought you'd come!" was his greeting.

"Of course I would," said Marian. "I'm all impatience to see my dear old lady."

"Who?" asked Uncle Rufus, looking puzzled.

"My old lady. The one I'm to live with. You haven't told me her name yet."

"Oh, yes, of course!" and Uncle Rufus laughed.

"My carriage is waiting, so come along. I'll give orders for an express to bring your trunk," said Uncle Rufus, as he led her to his carriage and seated her inside.

During her father's life a few visits had been made to her uncle's family, but as Mrs. Chester had no great affection for Miss Janet Chester, who lived with her brother and presided over his household, and whom Mrs. Edward Chester called "stiff" and "prim," these visits had been like angels' visits, few and far between. Still, Marian knew the house, and when they stopped before it she asked:

"Are we going to your house first, uncle? Does aunt Janet expect me?"

"Yes, she expects you. Go right in," said Uncle Rufus.

"I go in, but I can't stop long. I told you I was all impatience to see my dear old lady," said Marian.

"Oh, yes, so you did," said Uncle Rufus, laughing again. "Well, she is here; you can see her at once."

But when they entered the elegant parlor Marian saw only the calm, pale face of Aunt Janet, who greeted her most kindly. And the greeting over, Marian looked at her uncle. "Now, where is—?"

"Your old lady? Right here—here she is," said Marian.

"What-aunt!" began Marian.

"Yes, aunt! Isn't she an elderly lady? And doesn't she need a dear companion worse than anybody? Will I let her go off this summer with a paid hireling? No, I won't! But, child, we are lonely, and we do need a dear child for company. You'll stay with us and be our daughter, Marian!"

AN IDYL OF THE PAST.

BY WILLIAM TENNYSON HEATON.

The sunset kissed the yellow hill,
In the van of the first star shore,
Twilight shrouded cliff and mill,
And darkened hall and home,
From o'er the wave the vesper bell
Bung forth the hour of prayer—
On the tower the moonlight fell,
And on the stony stair.

The wind swept up the river plain—
A gentle sea-breeze—
Came along the winding lane,
And o'er the dewy leas—
Around my heart the shadows fell—
Only a word I said;
But sadder seemed that last farewell—
Than a farewell to the dead!

Wife or Widow?

OR,

ETHELIND ERLE'S ENEMY.

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "A GIRL'S HEART," "A DANGEROUS WOMAN," "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

INVESTIGATIONS.

"A moment stop! my lord, my lord,
Spare me—I kneel to you and wet the ground
With tears."

—BARRY CORNWALL.

Poor Dolores passed an anxious and sleepless night after the committal of her husband for trial.

About nine o'clock the next morning, having dressed herself in a suit of plain black, and put on her bonnet and shawl, she was about to leave the house when Aunt Jerry stalked out of the drawing-room, and planted herself directly in the way.

"Where are you going?" she demanded, in a curt tone.

"To visit my husband."

Aunt Jerry drew herself up with an angry snort.

"Your husband!" she sneered. "That wretch is no more your husband than I am. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Dolores Glynne."

Dolores bit her lip, and made an effort to pass on; but again she was intercepted.

"Stay where you are, you shall never pass out of that door bound on such a reprehensible errand."

"It is my duty to go," said Dolores, gently but firmly. "Please stand aside."

"Duty!" shrieked Aunt Jerry. "It is your duty to yield obedience to those who are older and wiser than yourself. Go back to the drawing-room, and planted herself directly in the way.

"I cannot. My husband expects me; I must go to him."

"I forbid you to go."

"But you have no authority to control my actions. I owe submission to none save my God and my dear husband."

Aunt Jerry trembled with passion.

"Girl, is it your deliberate purpose to defy me?" she raved.

"No, I have no wish to do that," said Dolores, still speaking in a calm and gentle voice, though there was a flash of fire in her brilliant dark eyes. "But you should not usurp authority that does not rightfully belong to you. If you do, I have no resource but to rebel."

There was a silence. Suddenly Aunt Jerry caught hold of the girl's hand—her own was cold as ice—and saying "Come with me," in a dry, hard voice, drew her forward into the drawing-room. All that was mortal of Egbert Challoner lay there waiting for the last salutes, which were to be performed at a later hour of that same day. The burial had been postponed as long as possible that Raymond might be present and superintend arrangements himself.

Aunt Jerry drew the shrinking girl close up to the coffin, which stood in the middle of the darkened room.

"Look there!" she said, in a raised voice, uncovering the face of the dead. "Look at your poor, murdered grandfather, and then go to the wretch who assassinated him if you have the heart to do it!"

Dolores burst into tears.

"Don't, Aunt Jerry. You shock and distress me. My burden is heavier than I can well bear, already."

Struggling clear of those relentless hands, Dolores hurried back to the hall, and sinking on a chair, gave way to a perfect storm of sorrow.

"You do feel ashamed of yourself—that is evident," said Aunt Jerry, grimly, for she had followed the girl.

"No, it isn't that. But a trouble like this is so horrid. Sometimes I almost give way. But Vincent is innocent of poor grandpa's death! Did I not believe this from the depths of my soul I should shrink from him in as great horror as you do."

"Poor fool! Did not the murdered man's very last words fix the crime upon that villain?"

"It was a mistake—a dreadful mistake," shivered poor Dolores. "There was no light in the room, and grandpa must have taken some one else for Vincent."

"Poor deluded fool!"

"I would stake my life on his innocence, and have told him so."

"You intend to cling to him in spite of everything?"

"I do."

"Mad girl! It is a wonder that your murderer does not rise out of his coffin to re-possess you."

Dolores absolutely wiped away her tears.

"Appearances are very much against my husband," she said, very low. "But that is no reason why I should condemn him. Some day, this mystery will be cleared up, and I shall try to be patient until that time comes."

And before Aunt Jerry could raise another objection, Dolores had quietly stepped past, and left the house.

Like all gentle, loving women, she listened not to the voice of reason, but to that of her heart. In spite of the damning evidence against him, it was still impossible for her to believe Vincent guilty of the heinous crime laid to his charge.

She found him pacing the floor of his cell, pale but calm. He had already had an interview with Mr. Nolan, the attorney who had been secured to defend him, and the man had just gone away with the frank admission that he could be promised to be the most difficult one he had ever handled.

At the sight of his wife, however, the prisoner attempted to banish every appearance of concern from his manner and countenance; and embracing her, said cheerfully:

"You come into my cell like a sunbeam, Dolores, only you are much more welcome."

"I have brought you a little package," said Dolores, speaking in a hurried tone, to hide her agitation. "Here it is, and taking a roll of bank-notes from her pocket she spread them on the little table underneath the window.

"Why, where did you get so much money?" Vincent asked, in a tone of surprise.

"It was intrusted to me by your sister Ethelind before she went away, yesterday afternoon. She said this would secure a great many comforts that you might otherwise be compelled to do without. And she wished me to urge upon you the necessity of employing the very best counsel in the State for your defense. Her purse is at your command."

"Heaven bless her!" cried the poor prisoner, in a tone of deep emotion. "I know she would do anything in the world to help me."

Then, forcing a smile, he added:

"I feel very rich, darling. See, I can dupli-

cate the sum you have brought, note by note."

So indeed he could. For, producing a second roll very similar in appearance to the first, he placed a note of like denomination upon each of those Dolores had laid down.

Looking into her wondering eyes, he said: "This is Colonel Falkner's gift. He pushed this money into my hand when he came to say good-by."

"I am very glad."

Before she said add another word, the cellar door was opened, and the warden ushered in a small, quiet-looking man who proved to be none other than our old friend, Detective Ferret.

When the warden had withdrawn, and Vincent turned to greet the detective, Dolores placed herself beside him and said, eagerly:

"I intended this as a surprise, my love. I sent for Mr. Ferret, and have secured his services that the mysterious crime for which you suffer may be thoroughly investigated."

"Thank you, Dolores. It was, perhaps, the wisest thing you could have done."

Mr. Ferret quietly helped himself to a chair.

"What defense did you offer at the examination, Mr. Erle?" he said, fixing his light gray eyes upon the young man's face.

"None, except to put in the plea of 'not guilty,' to earn the magistrate's and jury that I had left Mr. Challoner's grounds immediately after parting with Dolores, and had set out for Glenoaks without a moment's delay."

"What proof did you offer to substantiate your statement?"

"Alas, I had none save my simple word."

The detective appeared to ruminant for some time. At length he said:

"You may tell everything you can remember that has any bearing upon the events of that fatal night."

Vincent and Dolores, together, were enabled to give Mr. Ferret a very clear idea of the events that had already come to light. The two points in which he manifested particular interest, however, were those of Madam Zoe's mysterious disappearance, and the fact that Aunt Jerry had encountered a woman in the corridor when she was hurrying down-stairs after having been aroused by the cries of the murdered.

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Then, forcing a smile, he added:

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cate the sum you have brought, note by note."

burned within was the only indication that the room had been inhabited at all that evening.

Gray, leaden clouds covered the whole heavens like a pall. Even the night-birds were still; and the heavy, oppressive scent of flowers filled the air almost to faintness.

Plunging at once into the shrubbery, Colonel Falkner walked thoughtfully in the direction of the sea. He had not brooded far, however, when he saw some dark object fit swiftly from one group of evergreens to another, and pause there as if to rest or reconnoiter, though in all its movements there was an evident desire for secret observation.

"It is Ethelind," he thought. "Rash girl! She should not be wandering abroad at this hour of the night."

Sheltering himself behind a convenient trellis, he waited for the dark figures to come toward him. Several minutes elapsed before it moved at all, and then, as if in a sudden accession of courage, it started up and glided swiftly past within three or four yards of Colonel Falkner's hiding-place.

To his intense surprise, the figure did not prove to be Ethelind's after all, but the day after, but with no different result. He was turning away from the door on the occasion of his third visit, when he encountered the housewife, Phoebe Jelly. She silently beckoned him to follow her a few steps down the walk, out of sight from the house.

"You seem very anxious to see my mistress, sir," said the girl, abruptly.

"I am."

"Perhaps you are her lover, sir?"

The colonel felt his face flush; but, looking searchingly at the girl, he divined the truth in her eyes.

"She is a very eccentric, sir. But whatever secrets she keeps from us servants, I am sure she will have none from a gentleman like you. I think you can help her, sir."

"If you can, you will earn my undying gratitude," said Colonel Falkner, slipping a bank-note into the girl's hand.

Phoebe glanced hastily all round, and then shrank back to the wall.

JANE SHORE.

1482.

BY T. C. HARRAUGH.

The king is gone! another *fele!*
When will these pleasures cease to whelm
The life that longs with death to mate—
The king is gone! another *fele!*
What! faded? No! my mirror tells
That I am fair as when that day,
For me rang out the wedding bells,
And Cleopatra smiled to see me gay!

There was a time!—could I forget!—
When I was happy by the side
Of one who somewhere lingers yet—
What! won my girlhood's guileless pride.
But now!—no, man, I!
A loathsome yet a lovely thing,
Unto my God a living lie!
The puppet of a warlike king!

His wife? no! I am not his wife!
There is a name I durst not speak,
That which I am—will be the life!
Like heated iron, it sears my cheek.
The iron of his remorseless stones
falls on my brain, and guiltless drip;
Its icy terrors chill my bones;
And Judas-like makes every lip.

I am the king's! That word again
That haunts my pillow in the night!
It burns into my tortured brain,
Never to be exiled from my sight!
To me, Edward's countries all,
A hardened scoundrel, fawning band;
Eager to catch the wiles that fall
From lips, the falsest in the land!

He made me what I am! His word
Is law unto the Eng'ish race!
I'd rather he'd rusted sword
Than bear this moment of disgrace.
Then—then, thank God! I would forget;
A sword hath neither heart nor brain;
A trusted sword is soon what,
Except by tears or crimson rain.

My Arab Angel.

A Story of the Great Syrian Desert.

BY COL DELLE SARA.

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1868, found me standing, a free man, in the streets of Cairo, in Cairo, the city of the pyramids, the oasis, that amphibious town built by man's genius in about the worst swamp and on the most unlikely spot for a city—leaving the two rivers out of the question—that could be chosen; but Cairo, Egypt, the land of the pyramids, the kingdom of the khedive.

After our late "unpleasantness" was over, like a great many others, used to years of military life, and not knowing what on earth to do to get a decent living in any civil occupation, I emigrated to Mexico and entered Maximilian's service, where, like the rest, I received more kicks than half-pence; the downfall of the emperor, abandoned by that prince of jugglers and charlatans, the Dutchman who dazzled France with the name of Napoleon, and humbugged all Europe into the belief that he was a statesman, and betrayed by the scurvy Mexican officers, whom he trusted, set me once more free to sell my sword in the highest bidder. And as the Khedive of Egypt, at that time, was making flattering offers to American officers to enter his service, I was induced to negotiate, and finally accepted a position in his forces.

After a fair trial, though, I became dissatisfied, and then had the luck to become involved, despite myself, in a quarrel with one of the civil officers of the khedive, a portly, arrogant Englishman, who had an idea that he knew about everything that was worth knowing, and that everybody ought to give way to him. Well, this gentleman took offense at some remarks of mine, forced me into a quarrel, and finally challenged me. In my hot-headed way, I accepted, and had the satisfaction of putting a bullet through the shoulder of my antagonist at the first fire. I could easily have put it through his head, but I didn't wish to kill the man, for I have been a dead-shot with the revolver ever since I was six years old.

This little affair terminated my engagement with his lordship of Egypt, and so, as I said at the beginning, Christmas morning found me a free man, wondering in what direction I should next turn my footsteps.

A passer-by accosted me, an honest Hebrew merchant of my acquaintance—Moses Cohen by name.

Noticing that I was in plain clothes he inquired the reason.

I explained that I was no longer in the Egyptian service.

"And what are you going to do now?" he asked.

I replied that I had not yet decided.

"If you have a few hundred dollars that you care to invest in trade, I can put you in the way of making a good thing of it," with a knowing wink.

As I happened to be pretty well situated as far as money was concerned, I at once resolved to embrace the offer, particularly as I knew Cohen to be a shrewd, honest fellow, and so I told him that I would be pleased to join in the enterprise.

He gave me the details at once.

A caravan was about to start from Cairo and penetrate into the Syrian Desert, there to traffic with a certain tribe of Arabs for horses, those of the desert, "shod with fire," and for which there is always such an excellent market.

I went with my honest Hebrew friend at once and was introduced to his partners in the enterprise.

Two days later we set out.

Counting our servants we mustered some fifteen strong, a force rather small to encounter the perils of the desert, I thought, and so I pressed my opinion to my associates; but they assured me that there was no danger; that the wild tribes never molested the trading caravans, but I noticed, though, that my honest friends were careful to keep a vigilant watch after nightfall.

The danger that I dreaded came at last; we were some fifty miles from the town of Boxrah and had got fairly into the desert, and were within two days' journey of our objective point, when our camp was rudely awakened from its slumber one night by a fierce and sudden attack.

The Arabs—a horde of thieves of all the wild tribes—were upon us in full force.

Our sentries had slumbered upon their posts, and the first thing we knew of the attack was the wild yell of the fierce warriors right in our midst.

Sleeping I constantly did with my hand on my revolver-but, I was ready for action in an instant. I let fly three shots and then, a fierce Bedouin—a gray-bearded old chaps evidently a man of no little boldness down; I partly dodged the horse, saw the flash of the rider's steel as he whirled his saber in the air, and understanding that my head was in danger, threw up my arm to ward off the blow.

My head escaped the full force of the shock, although getting a pretty smart tap, but my arm suffered, and, somehow, over I went in a swoon. I fancy that the horse pranced sideways, knocked me down and then trod on me; anyway, when I recovered I was sore in every limb.

Some time elapsed before I recovered my senses. When I came to it was broad daylight and I found myself reclining on a sumptuous couch in an apartment well furnished after the Eastern style; my arm had been placed in a sling, refreshments were on a low stool by my couch, and a few paces from my bedside, reclining on an ottoman, was a fair a dusky maid as every eye had looked upon.

An Arab angel and no mistake!
Her hands were clasped together in her lap, and with her large lustrous eyes she was gazing languidly into my face.

No Arab tent was this sumptuous apartment, and I marveled much as to where I was.

"You are not dead, oh! Frank!" the girl cried, her voice low and musical.

"No, I believe not," I answered, "although at the first sight of you I was inclined to believe that I was and had come straight to Paradise."

She laughed; woman-like, she was not averse to flattery.

"Oh, no," she replied; "you are still on earth and in great danger. Do you know where you are?"

"I do not," I answered. "The Arabs are to blame for my wounded arm and my present disabled condition; but this is not an Arab tent."

"No; you are in Boxrah, in the house of Pasha Ali Jih."

I could not repress an exclamation of astonishment. When we had passed through Boxrah Cohen had told me that the pasha of the town was a most inveterate old scoundrel, and was suspected of being in league with the robbers of the desert for a ransom.

I thought that it was best not to deny this pleasant fiction, for the old scoundrel of a pasha would not be apt to injure the goose that he believed would lay golden eggs for him, but I expressed my surprise that the pasha of a Turkish town should dare allow himself to be mixed up with a gang of robbers.

Ah, but he is a cunning old wretch; he will not let any one know that you are here. He will send a message to your friends that you are in the hands of the robbers, and that he will negotiate with them to release you. He is a vile old wretch—my husband!"

I was rather astonished at this admission, made in perfect sincerity, but I held my peace.

"I am his wife!" she continued, her lip curling in scorn; "his tenth wife; he bought me of my father who was greedy enough to sell me to this old dog. But, I am a true child of the desert, and the pasha has never even dared to lay his hand upon me since I came here. He knows that I wear a dagger and that I am not afraid to use it. He trusts that in time I will be content, and so let me do about as I like, but I will never be content with him; I want a Frank for a husband."

This was rather a strong declaration, and under the peculiar circumstances I felt a little embarrassed; but this child of nature never took least notice of my hesitation, but proceeded coolly on her speech:

"Why don't you go to the basement door?" asked the servant, sharply, on seeing only an old beggar-woman before him.

"Because I have business with your new mistress," she answered, quite unawed by his digressions.

"That might prove to be a large sum!"

"Ay, but your portion will be nine times larger!" Let me tell you first, Myra Wainwright, that I have come to you first, for a reason of my own; but that, if I am dissatisfied with you, I will go to the *Brave Barbara*, etc.

CHAPTER VII.

A MESSAGE.

BY E. Z. WAY.

You only half-promised me, brownie,
When on your lips trembled adieu,
To press from life's roses the honey
So precious to him and to you.

Your maidenly coyness was pretty;
Your eyes they were tender and deep,
And in their still depths glowed the pity
That shadowed the secret you'd keep.

You said: "I'll be sisterly—loving,
And gracious as sister can prove;
I'll give him all trust worth bestowing—
But not that one proof of my love!"

Is your life so filled up with blisses,
Dear brownie, who can say *noway*?
To passion you know such as his—
To love no test can unsay!

Oh! beautiful sophist! no longer
Clasp the dull chain round you cast!
And, proud in your grace, grow the stronger.
To own yourself conquered at last!

Madcap,

The Little Quakeress;

OR,

THE NAVAL CADET'S WOOING.

A Romance of the Best Society of the Penn City.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,
AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," "WAR OF HEARTS," "BRAVE BARBARA," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

FORTUNE-TELLING.

MEANTIME the beggar to whom he had given alms with a recommendation to her to seek some place of shelter immediately, seemed in no hurry to get out of the cold and coming darkness; she continued to sit where she was, pretty though protected by her thick shawl, drawn over head and ears, until the lamplighter set the gas to blazing in lamp in front of her; then she arose and crawled up to the door, ringing the bell.

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"Ay, but your portion will be nine times larger!" Let me tell you first, Myra Wainwright, that I have come to you first, for a reason of my own; but that, if I am dissatisfied with you, I will go to the *Brave Barbara*, etc.

"But you cannot give her what is *mine*!"

"Ay, is it *yours*? Do no doubts trouble you? Are there none to labor in your cousin's cause?"

"I am not gainsaying you," asserted Myra, beginning to tremble. "I am willing to accept your terms, as soon as you prove to me your right to make them."

The woman again glanced about the room, went to the two doors—each of which closed behind soft blue draperies so as to appear part of the wall—dropped off her ugly shawl and stood before the heiress looking quite another.



An Arab Angel, and no mistake.

"My new mistress?" he queried, puzzling himself to make out her meaning.

"Yes, with Miss Myra Wainwright. She is mistress here now, is she not? Tell her that a person who knows how to tell fortunes wants to tell hers."

"I don't think she'll take up with such foolishness, old woman. Come in; but I shan't leave you a-standing here, when I don't know what you may be after. Tummas! Here, Tummas, you boy, stand 'ere an' watch the old witch while I tell our young lady as she presents her compliments an' would request the pleasure of a *say-ance* with her."

The woman's keen black eyes flashed a look after the footman; then turning to the boy she remarked, with a grim smile:

"Ay, watch me close, little one; I might have you don't have a card."

But, the footman did not have to leave the room to climb the stairs; he was at the door while the old woman was still, though its owner must have been nearly forty. She wore large gold earrings and a broad gold necklace.

Altogether there was an air of power about her—not as if she had ever belonged to a high class; but as if energy and ambition of spirit had raised her above the station in which she was born. Myra thought her a person to be feared as well as admired.

"When I have said to you what I have to say, you can judge how far to trust my words. I am a woman, and I have a right to speak for myself."

"Yes, I am ready to breathe into your ear what I have to say, and I will do it. You are ambitious," she remarked, suddenly fixing on the girl her powerful gaze; "I think you like the first place—money, independence—to be your own mistress and to dictate to others. This awaits you—you have only to reach out and take everything. You can be a queen. But I must have my reward for serving you. I want money; I too, have my ambition."

"You shall have plenty of money," murmured Myra, whose cheeks were red and whose eyes on fire at these alluring promises.

"You must swear to betray nothing until I give you leave."

"I swear, now and here, by my own soul, to betray nothing."

"Then I am ready to breathe a story into your ears to which no one in this broad world has the key but myself. One other person knows a part of it—she *would* come in. She says she wants to tell your fortune, miss; I am coming to see you about that."

"You'd better take her down to Norah and Peggy, Bribes."

"No, my lady, it is you that I have come to tell a fine fortune to," spoke up the woman, advancing quite near to the young lady. "I'm a Cuban, lady, and I'm said to have a gift. I can tell many things in the future; I never fail."

Now Myra was not without a spice of superstition in her nature. She was secretly much troubled, also, with downy methedness and bad luck; so she determined to break the will; she wanted to know what her chances were with John Garwell; she was idle, and reflected that she might amuse herself until dinner with this old hag. Ethel was in her own room; she could have an interview with the fortune-teller without being ridiculed by any one; so she finally said:

"Well, come in here with me. Let me see, now, how much you know about the future, and, half-laughing, she led the way into a charming boudoir beyond the two drawing-rooms.

The stranger closed the door and Myra seated herself in a blue-satin-and-gilt chair, in an indolent attitude.

"Describe my future husband, please," she said, pertly.

"He is tall, slender, dark-brown hair, gray eyes—a little under thirty years old. He has a scar on his left hand made by the bite of a horse; he is fond of horses," the woman went on, slowly, holding the tiny hand of the girl, with the palm open to her inspection.

"You have seen him!" cried Myra, blushing brightly.

"Yes, as," said the stranger, now holding Myra's hand firmly in her strong grasp. "I have seen John Garwell. I did not come here to practice upon you the trickery of a Gipsy. I came to you, Myra Wainwright, because I'm the possessor of a secret which you would almost give me to know. Can any one hear us?" looking about her.

"No, I think not. My cousin is up-stairs the servants at their dinner. We can speak low," answered Myra, speaking eagerly.

With natural quickness she had connected the assertion of the woman that she was a Cuban with some secret which should bear upon the mystery of Ethel's birth. What could this dark, poor-looking creature tell her? Was she in danger of losing all? Was she to be confirmed in her possessions? Cool as the young lady was by nature, she felt her color come and go; her heart throb hardly ceased at her side.

"I can assure you that which you have all ready; I can fix your title to money and estates in Cuba which will more than double your present wealth."

"How?" asked Myra, under her breath.

"That is my secret. It is a secret for which you will have to pay me well—well, liberally, extravagantly!" But then you will be able to pay me well. All I ask is a thousand dollars now and one tenth—reflect, what a trifle, one tenth! of the property which I shall make it in your power to claim."

sinking of the heart, "to be duped into letting her go! It was all a *ruse* on her part, taking the car. Doubtless she returned to the river as soon as she could, unobserved, and threw herself in! I saw self-murder in her white face. I almost fear as if her death lays at my door."

Evelyn did, indeed, feel terribly agitated in recalling that perhaps if he had passed her watching her, he might have saved a human life. But, it would do no good to brood over the unrecallable. He was to start at noon, on a steamer bound for Havana, and on which his passage was already taken, on his curious errand—like that of some medieval knight—of righting the wrongs of his fair lady.

Surely, his impulse and his purposes were as pure and gallant as those of any plumed knight who ever fought in a maiden's cause. Webster Evelyn might never have taken the fancy of a romantic girl, like one of those graceful heroines of the tournament, as he stepped out of Mr. Dobell's office, buttoning about his tall figure his frayed overcoat; but at heart he was the noblest of noble cavaliers.

He set out on his search with absolutely no clue to what he sought, except the fact that Cyril Wainwright had married a Cuban lady, in such a year; and had returned on such another year, saying that he was a widower, and bringing with him a little girl of two years, who, he said, was his daughter, and always treated as such until the day of his death; but whom, in his will, he declared not to be his daughter, and so had disinherited her.

It had seemed strange to Mr. Dobell, when he first set out to make inquiries about Mr. Wainwright's early life, that in reality his most intimate friends knew so little on the subject. Everything had been left to guess.

Cyril Wainwright had been an only child; his father had been a highly-respected merchant of the city, and had sent his son, at the age of twenty-three, down to Cuba, to attend to some sugar interests which he had there.

Cyril's nearest friends could only recall, when questioned, that his father had died while the son was in Cuba; that Cyril was said to have married the daughter of a wealthy planter; that he had been called home on the death of his father, and had returned, in deep distress, having also lost his wife, not a month before; and that he brought with him his little girl, Ethel; and had, from that time, lived entirely in his Philadelphia home, devoted to his daughter, and the memory of his wife who had died in her youth, and for whose sake he had never again married. That when his brother failed in business, and afterward died, he invited his brother's daughter, Myra, to share his home, and be a companion for Ethel.

It was a suspicious point that, on questioning Ethel, she could not reveal her mother's family name, and that there was no record of it among Mr. Wainwright's papers.

Mr. Dobell had been forced to the conclusion that Ethel's appearance on the stage was due to some love-affair in which the young merchant had become entangled with some one far below him in the social scale. But he might, indeed, have even misrepresented the real character of his alliance in order to bring home this child as his own; but, why, in that case he should have brought the child and reared her as his daughter and heiress, puzzled the lawyer.

Of course, he had not betrayed his suspicions to Ethel.

It was this fact that Mr. Wainwright had always treated the girl as his daughter and legal heir, which fastened itself in Evelyn's mind.

He loved that unhappy, disinherited young lady. For the love he bore her, in silence and without return, he had resolved to do all that a sharp, patient lawyer could do to ascertain what her position really was, and to look for some good cause for an attempt to break the will and restore to her what she had lost.

And so he sailed for Cuba without even the encouragement of feeling that she wished any one to interfere.

When the New Year came in, Evelyn was in Cuba. Coralie Clyde was as completely lost as if she had soared to the sky, and John Garwell, in the desperate necessities of his situation, was devoting himself to a woman whom he despised far more than he loved—Myra Wainwright.

Coralie's flight had placed him in an awkward and uneasy plight. The creditors whom he had silenced with fair promises came about him again like a swarm of wasps. His father, to whom he had turned, had appealed very angrily with him; would not advance ten dollars beyond the sum necessary for his daily wants, and even threatened to turn him out of his house. In this desperate plight he naturally recalled the flattering preference of Miss Myra for himself.

He had fancied sweet little Coralie well enough to be satisfied to compel her to become his wife; but the vain, selfish Myra he had studied and fathomed only to despise. However—something had to be done! Behind him, on New Year's evening at her feet!

Scarcely two weeks since Coralie's disappearance, yet she was already the suitor of another, and wealthier lady!

That first day of the New Year had been a long, miserable day to Ethel. As when we first saw her standing by the window in the first agony of her father's illness, so she stood now for hours—a little back from the view of the hundreds of "callers" who thronged that fashionable street—staring, with strange, bright, feverish eyes at the glittering equipages rolling by. This gay, outside world was so changed to her from what it had been, a year ago!

She knew that John Garwell came often to see Myra. She now knew him as he was—an unprincipled man; but it is almost as hard to root out a dead love as a living one—and to tear the scabbed heart from a worn-out human heart gave her many a fierce pang, notwithstanding her respect for him was dead.

John Garwell had opened the one sweet fountain in Myra's spirit; for him it shone clear and full. The brief wintry afternoon of New Year's day, stayed on the Wainwrights, owing to their mounting. She did not return.

A servant came to call Miss Ethel to the five o'clock dinner. She was cold and pale, and had eaten nothing since breakfast; but she felt as if the sight of the table with Myra at its head would be hateful to her; so she lingered a few minutes where she was; then went slowly down the broad stairs; but, when she reached the main hall it required more firmness than she had left to keep on to the dining-room.

She turned and entered the little boudoir back of the double drawing-rooms. It was dark there, and peaceful. The windows of the boudoir faced the west. Through the parted long silk curtains came the light of a just-risen full moon, whose warm flush of sunset was reflected with the worn flush of sunset. But, as choking down her tears—lonely, desolate, sick—she slipped in here, went to one of the windows, dropped the heavy curtains behind her, and stood there a long, long time, in a dream-world, illuminated by moonlight—a world once sweet as June, but gaudy and frozen now, like the poor rose-bushes which rattled their icy branches against the pane.

"Alone! alone! Oh, I wish I were dead!" whispered her dry lips, as she lifted her beautiful, pale face—like marble in that silver light—to the far-off heaven.

Poor Ethel! she knew nothing of the one brave, honest heart which loved her with true manly love—the love that protects, that reveres, that works for its idol. She never gave a thought to the poor young lawyer who was serving her, or trying to serve her, with his best effort.

Absorbed in her own intense emotions, she did not hear or see the entrance of two people into the moonlit boudoir.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 412.)

UNCLE REMUS'S CORN-SHUCKING SONG.

"OH! GO 'WAY, SINDY ANN!"

BY J. C. HARRIS.

Oh, de fus' news you know de day'll be a-breakin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) An' de fer be a-burnin' an' de ash-ake-a-bakin', (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) An' de hen'll be a-hollerin' and de bo'sll be a-warnin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Better git up, bigger, an' give yo'self a-shakin' (Hey O! Hi O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey w'en you see dem ripe stars a-fallin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Oh, honey w'en you hear de rain-crow a-callin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Oh, honey w'en you hear de squinch-owl a-hootin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Den de daytime's a-comin', a-creepin' an' a-crawlin' (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

CHORUS.

Per de los' ell-an'-yard is a-huntin' for de mornin', (Hi O! Hi O! Git 'long! go 'way!) An' she'll ketch up widus' fo' we ever git dis corn in— (Oh, go 'way, Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey w'en you see dem ripe stars a-fallin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Oh, honey w'en you hear de rain-crow a-callin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Oh, honey w'en you hear de squinch-owl a-hootin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Right den she's a-comin', a-skippin' an' a-scootin' (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, honey w'en you hear de rain-crow a-callin' (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) W'en you see Miss Moon turnin' pale an' gittin' sicker— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Den it's time for to handle dat corn a little quicker— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!) Ef you wanta git a smilin' uv ole Master's jug er lieker— (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

You niggers ober dar! You better stop your dan'— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

No use for to come a-round yo' feets' in— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

No use for to fer to a-mingin' yo' can'ts' in— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Kaz! dey ain't no time fo' yo' puttin' on yo' prancin' (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Mister Rabbit see dis fox an' he sass um an' he jaws um— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Mister Fox ketch de rabbit, an' he scratch um an' he claws um— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

An' he t'as off de hide, an' he chaws um an' he gnaws um— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Same gal chawin' sweet gum and rozzum— (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

Oh, work on, boys! give dese shucks a mighty ring—in— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

For de bo'ss come a-round a-dangin' an' a-dangin'— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Git up an' git up arooun'! set dem big han's ter swingin'— (Hey O! Hi O! Up'n down de Bangol!)

Git up'n shout loud! let de white folks hear you singin'! (Hey O! Miss Sindy Ann!)

It is just," said the king, "Go, Sir Lancelot, you may not be her champion."

Sir Lancelot looked wildly at the king, and reading the stern resolution in his eyes, uttered a cry of pain, and fled from the judgment-hall, like one demented.

"See, see!" cried Modred. "Thus the guilty fly before their accusers."

"Be silent, my brother," commanded the king. "Speak, Guinevere; what say you to the charge?"

"I am innocent, oh, king," she cried. "I had no hand in the death of this knight."

The king inclined his head slowly, and ordered her to be removed from the room while he consulted with the judges. Not long after she was brought in, and the king pronounced judgment.

"This is the sentence of your judges, Guinevere," he said, in a sad tone. "From the morning until the setting of the sun you will stand at the stake with the fagots piled about you. If a champion appears in your behalf, well; if not, when the sun goes down, the hand of the executioner shall light the pile. God aid you, and give you a champion!"

The morning came, bright and fair, and in the open plain outside the walls of Camelot, where the sun was high, the fagots were piled, and the fainted queen stood bound to the stake. All about her, in a great circle, held back by the lists, was a vast multitude, waiting for the end.

The king, covered from head to foot, even to his face, sat upon his throne at one side of the lists. At the upper end Sir Evan had set up his shield before his tent, waiting for the man who dared to strike at the death of Guinevere, while he lay within his tent, armed at all points, ready to do battle.

The day wore on, the sun passed meridian, and yet no man had dared to lift the hand in the cause of the accused. Nearly all believed her guilty, some doubted only, and not one had sufficient faith in her innocence to take up arms in her behalf, since Lancelot had been driven away.

Guinevere, in agony, looked at the declining sun. Guilty or innocent she had hoped that her sweet face, and the royal kindness she had shown to many, would have earned her one friend. But at this time, not one of the family of Lancelot or her own brothers, were in or near Camelot, and so strong was the suspicion that she had not one friend.

It was growing later, and as the sun slanted from the sky a murmur of expectation was heard, and the multitude swayed to and fro as if moved by a mighty wind.

"Not one friend, not one!" sadly sighed the queen. "Lancelot, Lancelot, the only one who would have fought in my behalf, right or wrong, has been driven from me. And Arthur, my king, sits there with covered face and will see me die."

At this moment, while the last rays of the descending sun glistened on the orb'd shield of Sir Evan, there was a sudden commotion at the entrance to the lists, and a man clothed from head to foot in linked mail, bearing a shield without blazon or device of any kind, rode boldly in. Once he made the circuit of the lists, and paused before the captive queen.

"Speak, Guinevere," he said, in a voice which sounded strange and hollow behind his barred visor. "Speak truly, fair queen. Is she guilty of God, are you guilty or innocent of this crime?"

"Fair knight," replied the sad queen, "I swear to you by my queenly honor, by my mother's spirit, by everything I hold holy and pure, that I am stainless in this crime which is imputed to me!"

"Remember that he who draws sword for thee must die if he fail," he added. "Do me no wrong, fair queen."

"If you fight this battle, Sir Knight," she answered, "do it boldly, for I am innocent as your own mother of this crime."

The stranger knight sprang from the saddle, pressed his lips to the hand of the queen, and sprang again to his steed. Riding close to the shield of Sir Evan, he struck it with the truncheon of his lance until it rang again, and the Scottish knight was dismayed.

"Ha!" he cried. "Wilt do battle for this fair devil, Sir Knight?"

"Ay," was the response, "to the death, an' you will."

The trumpet sounded, and Sir Evan sprung armed into the saddle, while the unknown retreated to his place in the lists and couched his lance, which he had taken from a squire who also wore his visor down.

"God defend the right!" cried the grand marshal, and the trumpet sounded, and the two knights, boding low in the saddle, urged their steeds to the shock. Hard was the stroke the Scottish knight gave the stranger. Back he went to his shield, and, at the point of his lance, catching the Scot under the gorget, fairly lifted him from the saddle, and sent him flying through the air with tremendous force, and he rolled over and over on the ground with a tremendous crash. Down sprang the stranger knight dager in hand, and set his foot upon the breast of the prostrate knight, while the air was rent by the acclamations of the multitude.

"Yield or die!" cried the victor. There was no reply; Sir Evan lay silent on the sod, and the king threw his warden down.

"Have I conquer'd?" demanded the victor, turning to the judges.

"Ay" was the response. "Guinevere, Queen of Britain, is free from stain."

They hurried in to release her, and making a

haughty gesture to them to stand aside, she approached her champion.

"Sir Knight," she said, "faithful among the faithless, I must see thy face."

Without raising his visor, hurled the helmet aside, and without raising his visor, hurled the helmet aside. Guinevere gave a cry of joy, and sprung into his waiting arms, for in her champion she saw her husband, Arthur, the stainless king. And the man who had taken his place, hurling off his drapery, revealed the face of Galahad. But, the victory was won, and at the feet of the king lay the form of Evan, of Liddesdale, cold and dead.

"No; Helice would have kept this passage; moreover, they are in a light canoe and sister handles a paddle with wonderful skill. We'll be apt to find them at the river."

They were nearing the river, and as the girls were still not in sight, Sparrowhawk began to feel uneasy.

Finally they glided out into the river. The moonlight flooded the stream. Quickly the young men glanced up and down the glimmering, placid waters; but nowhere could the girls be seen.

"My God!" cried Sparrowhawk, "we have missed them, Silver Star!"

"And I fear the worst for them."

With the strength of a madman Sparrowhawk dipped his paddle and sent the canoe leaping through the water back into the reeds, then stopped and listened. But nothing on earth save the roar of the rising wind rushing over the wilderness of reeds could be heard.

"Oh heavens! this is too bad. My poor sister! my poor little friend, Elwe!" groaned the young recluse.

"We may find them yet, Sparrowhawk; let us go back the way we came and search the side passes."

"We'll be sure to meet the accursed Blackfeet; but then why should I care? I am growing desperate. This is worse than the torture-rack—death is preferable."

"Don't give up, Sparrowhawk," said Silver Star, in tones of encouragement; "I've stood face to face with death every five hours in the last forty-eight; but yet the hand of Providence has not yet deserted me."

"Well, I'll admit I am too despondent at times," said the young recluse, "I will follow your suggestion, my friend."

He dipped his paddle, and again sent his canoe gliding along the passage they had come. It now became necessary to use more precaution, for they were liable to meet Blackfeet at any turn. Silver Star, who sat in the front of the boat, kept on the alert for danger, and when about half-way back, the sound of voices fell upon his ears. He gave the alarm, and the canoe stopped. Both listened—both heard the voices. They were Indian voices.

The youths turned their boat aside, and pulled from the main shore where they were well concealed from the Indians.

The dip of a paddle sounded near, and a moment later a canoe, with half-a-dozen Blackfeet, passed along, going in the direction of the river. It was immediately followed by several others, loaded with Indians and plunder from the cabin. It seemed to our friends that all must have left the swamp, and as soon as the rear boat was out of hearing, they crept from their concealment, and moved on toward the cabin.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE SURVEYORS' CAMP.

"YES, Kitsie," said Old Arkansaw, as he and Kit Bandy made their way back from the river into the woods. "that wife o' yours is a treasure—a genius. What woman ever born'd a' thought of makin' a canoe of her ambrilla, and sailin' out across a roarin' river?"

"Oh, yes; she's a jewel in your eye, Arkansaw, but if you'd a' had a red-hot skillet flapped over your head or a tater-masher driven into your diogyony as often as I have, you couldn't see anything smart in the old catapult that done the violence. Oh, I honestly wish the Ingine'd skulper her, dash her old picters; but instead o' that she's actly bein' pomped up and courted by the boy o' a White Crane. He's even promised her the position of queen if she'd give up the white people entirely. Lordy! what a queen she'd make! Knock the socks off Queen Victory of France. She's a doctor, and that's what makes the Ingine like her. She really does know somethin' bout pills and sickin' and has brought more'n one buck Ingine out o' the kinks a-flyin'. Oh! she's a sort of a goddess, and a free character 'mong them, and's haydoogins of friends. But she can't stand it always. She'll flap her heel ag'in the bucket some of these days, and then she'll call on Peter at the gates o' Paradise."

"Ah! you think she'll be an angel, do you?"

"She'll go through if she takes a notion in spite o' the doorkeeper's club. She's a will o' her own, has Sabina, and alers makes a way; and I reckon she'lloller me upon earth and off."

"She'lloller you, Kitsie, after you leave this mindsear, she'll catch blue-blazes with."

"She'lloller if she takes a notion, brimstone or no brimstone; but nebbey the devil and I both can head her off. But, lookeey here, Arky, suppose you and me visit this surveying camp and see what they're doin'. Somehow or other I can't reconcile myself to Surveyor Braash and Scientific Daymon. There's plenty o' royal ole cussedness crappin' out o' their eyes; but, arter all, everybody arn't villains because they're not as handsome and lovely and sweet-spirited as you and me, Arky. Do you know that?"

"That's so, Kitsie; but that's Silver Star that we must look arter, too; and, also, that dasted young feller with the sparryhawk cap and feather jacket. He's got that gal Elwe, 'bout which Silver Star talked so much; and, for some reason or other, he's threatened the life of the Boy Knight. I've an idea sneakin' under my skulp, Kit, that that Sparryhawk's not the clear quill."

"D'y'e think so, Arkansaw? Why? State yer reason, will ye?"

"Now, you know o' his mysterious comin' and goin'. Now, you know o' his knowin' a dashed thing 'bout where he belongs; and I've heard it hand hint, ed that he's the leader o' a gang o' robbers, and that his handle is Osman, the Outlaw!"

"Great horn that pulled old Jericho! D'y'e think that's a shudder of truth in it, Arky?"

"Couldn't swear that that is, but my own suspicion's what hinted it to me. A mule's head's not always stationary when the mule's asleep, Kit Bandy; so keep that in your pipe."

Thus conversing the two old bordermen pushed on through the forest in the direction of the surveyors' camp, and in the course of a few hours they came in sight of the place. It was located in a natural defensive position, and commanded a view in all directions. It was situated upon a high hill or knoll sloping off in all directions. The sides of this knoll were barren of vegetation, smooth and covered with a sandy soil; but upon its crest grew a little clump of trees and in among these the surveyors had pitched their camp.

Without any hesitation Old Arkansaw and Kit Bandy ascended the hill and entered the camp where they were met by Surveyor Braash and his men.

The scouts took in the camp at a glance. There were about fifteen men of different nationalities, and some of forbidding looks, in the party. All were armed to the teeth and looked as though they would as soon fight as eat. A wagon of the heavy military pattern, four draught mules and some twenty fine-looking saddle-horses and equipments comprised their outfit. As evidence of their business, there lay at one side a surveyor's staff, a compass, a theodolite, a Gunter's chain and pins, a flag-pole and other things pertaining to a first-class outfit of a surveying party.

"I am glad to meet you again, gentlemen," said Herman Braash, "and hope you will accept of the hospitality of our camp as long as you feel so disposed."

"Thank you, strangers," replied Bandy; "we're great guns for fun and good eatin'. We may, and we may not stay here awhile with you—till own't be a week."

"I thank you, gentlemen," said Professor Daymon, "to secure the assistance of one of you a few minutes in helping me make up the topography of this country. Whichever is the best acquainted with this vicinity will please step into my tent."

Kit Bandy motioned to Arkansaw to go with him, so the old scout followed him into the tent. The first thing the professor did was to take from an innocent-looking camp-chest a bottle of liquor and a small goblet and invite Arkansaw to drink. The old man touched the liquor lightly, and Daymon, after drinking himself, took a small, portable secretary from his chest and opening it drew a well-executed map of the White Earth river country therefrom. This he spread out before Arkansaw, and then said:

"I presume you can read and write, can you, Arkansaw?"

"Sorry to say, professor, that I don't know 'B' from 'A' for that. I used to have a hang of the letters, but as it alers seemed a waste of the raw material to be thinkin' 'em over, I let 'em go. I've filled up my noggin with some good, useful reseats for burns, curin' pelties and such."

"Well, I don't know as the want of a knowin' of the alphabet will binder you giving me just as much information as though you had the learning of Humboldt. This map, now, embraces this country so far as the geographical dimensions are concerned; but many of the prominent features of the region are not indicated by location, and as we have to make a complete report, even to minute details, we must have the information to make it upon. To travel the country over would require much time and labor, and so we decided to call some one already acquainted with the lay of the land, as the saying goes."

"Yes, yes," said Arkansaw, gazing upon the map; "but what river's that, professor?" he said, pointing to a red line running north and south across the map.

"That's not a river, but an isothermal line," Arkansaw," explained the professor, smiling at the old man's childlike ignorance; "but now, let us conneint at the Sioux village and follow after the river. What are the general features of the country?"

"Wah, professor, I'm not very handy in makin' g'ography, but then I'll tackle it best I know how. After leavin' the Sioux village the country, for a ways, is level and lightly timbered, but after it gits into the vicinity of the Spirit Swamp it's tumbled up 'wuss than a trundled bed, and kivered with stunted pines and grubs, till ye can't rest. Then comes the Spirit Swamp—a nasty dismal hole; put her down, professor. That's more'n five hundred acres of it, and nothing but reeds and willers, and frogs grow and ripen there."

"Is it accessible by foot or by canoe?" asked the professor.

"They say it's navi-gateable for canoes, tho' I can't say we're enough for g'ography. You see the swamp buckles up against the north side of the river, put it down, professor; and a canoe could enter it from the White Earth. But as it's said to be the abode of spirits and goblins, put it down, professor, that Old Arkansaw Abe, who's not afraid to face death and destruction, could not be hired to enter it in broad day-light."

"Then you have never explored the swamp?" asked Daymon.

"Explored it! Heavens. I'd as soon think of explorin' purgatory. Why, perfesser, when I pass along the river when the Spirit buckles on to her, I feel cold and chokish. It seems as though the river is always blowin' over the swamp, and such a roar as them makes—why, I swear it makes a noise like a horse's raze on a dead nigger's head. Ol' Arky's deathless pill is the Spirit Swamp; put her down, professor."

For fully an hour Arkansaw continued his description of the country, and when Daymon had obtained all the information of this character desired, he turned the conversation upon other topics. The weather, the hunting, the Indians—all were fully discussed; and finally Daymon remarked, incidentally:

"We were all wonderfully worked up the other night, when encamped south of here, by the appearance of a dark spot against the clear sky. Many were the conjectures as to what it was, but none was right, for it proved to be a balloon. It was going north, and appeared to be settling toward the earth; but what became of it I know not."

"That was the night of the twenty-fust, weren't it?" asked Old Arkansaw.

"Let me see," said the professor, reflectively. "I believe it was—yes, it was the night of the twenty-first; I remember now. Did you see it?"

"No, but Silver Star, the Boy Knight of the Peraro, did; and that's not all. The balloon was mighty down when he seed it, and he heard the ballooners quarrelin' like man and wife 'moneys' bout somethin', and presently he saw a bundle loll down from the balloon with a rope. Then up went the air-boat, and the felers began to quarral ag'in, and presently the boy saw somethin'—well, it was a man—threw out o' the balloon and come screamin' down through the air, and strikin' the ground, was mashed into a lump o' red liver. And that might be sich a thing that Silver Star's in them clutches."

"The fast I do 'll be to reconnoiter that Blackfoot camp when night comes, and see what relation it bears to the surveyors' camp; and if that isn't some skulps to be listed. And it might be sich a thing that Silver Star's in them clutches."

"Well, while you're doin' the Blackfoot camp, I'll run up and interview the Si-ox next-nest."

"Hate to lose your comp'ny, Ka-ristofer."

"I'll meet you round these diggin's in day or two—mebby sooner. You may expect me down on you at any moment."

The two old bordermen parted, Bandy going west and Arkansaw by circuitous route, going through the direction of the Blackfoot camp. The latter did not hurry, for it was some time until night, and darkness was necessary for a successful reconnaissance.

When night at length came, he pushed forward and soon came in sight of the camp. A dim camp-fire marked its location, and with the stealth of a shadow he crept toward it until he had gained a point where he could command a good view of the place. He counted not less than thirty Blackfoot warriors and two white men. One of the latter he would have sworn was Professor Daymon, of the corps of surveyors, although he might have been mistaken.

He saw that the Indians were making preparations for breaking camp, and that the white men were moving their equipments and assisting in packing up. The savages were all armed and planned for the war-path, and when they at length took their departure, Old Arkansaw could not imagine what point they were aiming for. To satisfy himself, however, he followed to follow them, and by the time the last savage was out of camp, he was upon their trail—followin' lowin' hearing distance behind.

For some time they journeyed on through the woods, but finally reached the shores of the White Earth river, where a halt was made. A wide, sandy beach separated the river from the woods, and this enabled Arkansaw to see all their movements. He was surprised to see a number of canoes, large and small, lying upon the beach, and he was still more surprised when he saw the savages launch the boats and embark them.

"What war can the demons be goin'?" he asked himself.

Across the river lay the Spirit Swamp, and as if in answer to his question, the envoy of savages paddled over the stream and disappeared in the dark labyrinths of the black, dismal swamp.

"The bloody bastions!" exclaimed the old scout to himself, "they're goin' to explore that swamp. That's dev'ry on foot, or else they're doin' it in the interest of science and g'ography."

By the eye of Jupiter! I wonder, if in givin' that Skinfinit Daymon the lay of the land, and in describin' Spirit Swamp, I have made an infernal jassach of myself, as Old Kit intimat-ed?" Great Goshen! I'll swan if I had a cause to foll'er 'em, if I got completely abolished afore I got out o' that."

Thus running the borderman kept his watch by the shore, waiting for the red-skins to return. Two hours or more had passed, when suddenly the report of firearms mingled with savage yells, came rolling over the swamp.

"My good Lord of Israel!" said the scout, "the demons have found the retreat of some one—murderin' and skalpin' innerece people, and I, old blockhead and jassack, am to blame for it all! I thought I was so smart tellin' all I knew and hinthin' at what I didn't know! Great Judea! just listen! It's a regular little battle."

For some time the sound of conflict rung over the water, then all became silent. But Arkansaw still kept his watch by the river, and presently saw a canoe glide up of the river into the swamp. It contained two savages, whom the old scout recognized as Sparrowhawk and Silver Star, the Boy Knight. He was about to call to them when, to his surprise, he saw a dark, round object emerge from the woods, and pause just within the moonlight.

"By Juds!" he exclaimed, "that's that infernal Silent Slayer, and I'd give all my right and title in the sulphur regions if I could git one squint behind the critter's black shield. I'll be swatted if it isn't queer."

As he concluded his remarks, he turned his eyes toward the swamp, just in time to see Silver Star and Sparrowhawk glide back into the wilderness of death.

"I reckon," he thought, "them young cockalores have made up, or they wouldn't be prancin' round in their gondola so gay; and I'll be a coon-skin that Sparrowhawk lives in that swamp, and that he's been Blackfooted out. But what's that I heard? I'll be a'fraid—taken Sparrowhawk in handsonly?"

Another sound was heard, and the next thing that attracted the old borderer's eye was a beam of light that shot suddenly into the sky from near the center of the swamp, while almost at the same instant a dozen other red lights flamed up along the south side.

Ful well he knew what it meant—the savages had fired the swamp.

He watched the light. It grew brighter and brighter. Higher and higher the flames rose. Deep and dense the smoke rolled upward, with forked tongues of fire bursting out of it.

"Oh, salvation! somebody's goin' to be eternally roasted!" groaned Arkansaw; "and nobody's to blame but me—ah! there by the wiles of Solomon!"

This exclamation was caused by sight of a number of flames that came gliding from the swamp to the river. In the foremost one he saw two women evidently captives. Of this there could be no doubt, for the light of the burning swamp lit up the surface of the White Earth with the glare of the noon-day sun, revealing the very features of the savages in the boats.

The red-skins paddled across the river, and landed a few rods above where Arkansaw stood. Here they held a short consultation, when about half of them, with the two captives, re-embarked in the canoes, and turning down the river paddled out of sight. As they passed before him, Arkansaw saw that the captives were young girls, and he felt certain that one of them was Elwe, of whom Silver Star had told him.

The savages that landed took their way back toward their camp in the woods, and Arkansaw again found himself alone, waiting and watching for the Boy Knight and his companion.

"Is it accessible by foot or by canoe?" asked the professor.

"They say it's navi-gateable for canoes, tho' I can't say we're enough for g'ography. You see the swamp buckles up against the north side of the river, put it down, professor; and a canoe could enter it from the White Earth. But as it's said to be the abode of spirits and goblins, put it down, professor, that Old Arkansaw Abe, who's not afraid to face death and destruction, could not be hired to enter it in broad day-light."

"Then you have never explored the swamp?" asked Daymon.

"No, that old honey-mug of yours, Sabina Bandy."

"Oh, Arkansaw! you're a fiend—you devester!"

"Yes, and didn't Judas have a kiss for our Savior when he betrayed Him? humph! humph, Arkansaw!"

"Oh, well, if you goin' to quotin' Skript and usin' my typies, I arn't that, Ka-ristor."

"My boor-larnin's not very plentiful, and so if you want to run with me you've got to talk to solid sense right at me. But I can feeh one, Kitsie, that can hold you on the talk till the cows come home—that can read and talk on any subject from matrimony to a Babylonian inscription."

"Your confidant, Professor Daymon, eh?"

"No, that old honey-mug of yours, Sabina Bandy."

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"Thanks for the rose-tinted compliment,

Kitsie; but all jokin' aside, I struck a lead in Skinfinit Daymon's tent by stretchin' the blanket a little and bein' communicative."

"Indeed?"

"Yes, sir; he took out a map of these diggin's and axed me if I could read. I told him no, but I meant that I couldn't read Hottentot, and then he showed me the map. The first thing that rested my tent was a red line runnin' north and south across the map, and I axed him, 'What's that river?' and he said, 'Smile.'"

"Great Jehovah!" he finally exclaimed: "I do wonder if Silver Star and Sparrowhawk'll git that in lake of fire?" Mighty Moses! that is a grand, awful and—

He felt something touch his belt, and looking around, he saw a great bony hand lift his knife and revolver from his belt from behind his back.

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THAT EARLY MUSTACHE.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

What tongue can tell the joys that fill
The heart of young Tom. Dash
When 'neath his nose the first fuzz shows
Spotched out a mustache.

He's broader than the richest man
Could be with heaps of cash
Over that brown first streak of down—
That ghost of a mustache.

Some day the girls will praise its curis.
Oh, frost, be not too rash,
And touch one hair of promise there
And spoil that dear mustache!

A looking-glass he cannot pass,
Even though there'd be a crash,
For light and dark he looks to mark
The growth of that mustache!

How very slow it seems to grow!
And should you call it trash,
Or speak of it with touch of wit,
Heigh-ho! it's that mustache.

Ash it off'res dirt, and he'll feel hurt,
And both his eyes will flash
The yield, indeed, shows but scant seed
Planted for that mustache.

He holds cold tea for fear that he
Might scald and bring to smash
That little crop upon his lip.
He calls "his dear mustache."

He longs to see the time when he
Can twist it in a lash
And lay it there across his ear—
The prided, loved mustache.

It never lacks for brush and wax,
For this he spends some cash,
But horrors, oh, how very slow
Waxes that dear mustache!

Pride of his looks! The barber's art
Is now invoked by Dash
To create and irons
That fungus-like mustache.

The barbersilles and puts on oils—
Dries warranted to wash
And with many an ointment doth anoint
That delicate mustache.

And though this youth, in very truth,
Is large from eating hash,
Tis plain to see how much is he
Wrapped up in that mustache!

Post and Plain;

OR,

Rifle and Revolver in the Buffalo Range.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

II.

HOW TO SHOOT A PISTOL.

WHEN we stepped outside on the parade-ground of the fort we found that the snow had ceased, while the wind was blowing from a different quarter. The heavy gray clouds were scudding across the sky, low down, and the western horizon showed some patches of blue.

"We shall have a regular nipper-to-morrow," announced Bullard. "A north-west wind of the plains is no joke, tell you. The thermometer will be sure to ten below zero, at least. Later in the season it will sink to forty."

"And how do you manage to keep warm?" asked Moore.

"Oh, it never blows hard when we're down for forty. I'd sooner have a still day with forty degrees than a north-wester with ten. It doesn't cut you to the bone. However, we'll not borrow trouble if we can help it."

We passed across the parade-ground, which was now dotted with figures. The men were coming out of their quarters and beginning to snowball each other, while officers were strolling from one house to another. We noticed that in the garrison every one wore some sort of uniform, and that the blue great-coats were universal.

We made our way toward the stables, along a path which had already been made by the garrison snow-plows. On the way we passed several officers, and in each case we had to stop and be introduced all round, a ceremony conducted with a great deal of bowing and hand-lifting, for officers of the army are above all things polite. Two or three joined us when they heard where we were going, and we soon reached the garrison practice-ground.

This lay in rear of the long rows of stalls that composed the cavalry stables, and it proved to be a corral which had lately been occupied by cattle and horses. Bruce told us it was the exercising-ground for the morning gallop of the horses.

It had been agreed beforehand that Captain Bullard, who had the reputation of being the best pistol-shot in the garrison, was to instruct those of us who were deficient, and Miles—Bruce's orderly—followed us with a heavy box of ammunition.

"Now, gentlemen," said the captain, as we stopped before the board target about six feet square, "I suppose you all know that there are two distinct kinds of shooting. We do the one with a pistol and a long cartridge anywhere from fifty to a hundred and fifty yards, and it's just the same as rifle-work. You have to bring your sights on a line and hold them there, being careful not to pull off. Miles, go and nail up a target."

Miles went to the board fence and nailed up a paper target just like those we had used at Litton for shot-gun practice.

"Now, gentlemen, fire away," ordered Bullard. "One shot apiece; and I'll bet a dollar no one makes a bull's-eye at fifty yards."

This proved quite correct. The two-inch circle of black which formed the bull's-eye was nothing but a black speck at fifty yards.

Moore was the first to fire, taking slow, deliberate aim at arm's length. Miles, who stood near the target in a pit, put out a long pointer and marked the shot in the paper, just at the top edge.

Charley Green followed, and got on the target a little nearer. Old Mart then advanced and put in a bullet within some three inches of the bull, and the rest of us had about the same luck, all on the target, but none nearer the bull than four or six inches, while most of us were at the edge of the paper.

Then Bullard began to speak:

"You see, gentlemen, yonder is a two-foot target covering more space than the vitals of any man. Now, if you can't drop a man except by a chance shot, I notice you all shoot the same way, at arm's length. That's all very well for quick shots at short range, but it won't do for accuracy. Look here."

He was standing with his left side toward the target as he spoke, the pistol dangling loosely in his right. We heard the click of the locks, and the next moment Bullard threw up his left elbow as high as his face, resting the thumb and fingers of his open left hand on his breast. Up came his pistol hand, and the barrel of the weapon rested on the raised elbow of the marksman. Hardly taking any aim he fired, and Miles's pointer came out of the pit and rested just under his eye.

"I didn't expect to hit the bull that time," said Bullard. "I was only showing you how to aim quickly and accurately. You see it took me less than three seconds to fire, and I came nearer the bull than any of you gentlemen, who aimed slowly and deliberately. Some of you took nearly half a minute to fire. You can shoot as well as I can, if you will just alter your position; that's all. Now, Mr. Moore, you take a shot. Observe me again, and then try. I raise the left elbow and put the fingers on the breast bone. That gives a hard rest with no pulse to disturb the aim. Hold your breath when you fire. You will find your front sight almost as mark. Aim correctly. See."

As he spoke, he fired; and Miles showed the white disk over the bull's-eye for the first time that day.

That's the whole secret of accurate shooting

with the pistol at long range," said Bullard. "Treat it as a rifle, and get all the rest you can."

We very soon found the benefit of his advice, and our shots began to cluster round the bull's-eye in close proximity. Jack Moore and old Mart, who were both good rifle-shots already, as we knew, made bull's-eyes, and the greenest of us found very little trouble in sighting correctly over the rest made by the left elbow. Before another round could be fired it became necessary to change the target, as the holes could no longer be distinguished apart. By the time it was dark we had satisfied ourselves that we could shoot straight with a pistol, and went back to our quarters with great content.

Bullard had promised to show us what he meant by "quick shooting," that evening, and invited our party into the cellar of his quarters for the purpose.

"These heavy carriages," he explained, "go strong, and send a bullet so fast, that it's not safe to practice above ground, unless there's a dead plain and no people behind the target, or else a bank to hold the balls. I've got a target made with a face as smooth as Ruth's own; but he wrote verses that made Ruth cry, and the head that he sketched of her was 'just lovely.'

Opposite them Will Hurst did damage to the charms of "Strawberry Fields."

Sam had the most natural capriciousness of temper; but there was a steadiness in Will's gaze, when he chose to be serious, which made him stand just the least bit in awe of his displeasure, though she had never seen him manifest anger.

Everybody predicted that Will would some day develop into a "solid man" in business circles. This, and the fact that he had the only full-grown mustache in the party, may have made him attractive in the girl's eyes, though there had as yet been no love-passages between them.

Last came Ned Sawyer and the tall and rather stout Lou Barton.

Ned was short in build, with small hands and feet, light hair, light blue-gray eyes, and microscopic mustache; he played the piano with spirit, sung in a tenor voice, and waltzed divinely. It was probably his *elegance* that attracted the girl. On his side, he liked Lou because she was by all odds the most stylish girl the village could boast.

Any other of the village swains would have thought twice before catching this rather haughty young lady off her feet; but Ned, with a *young lady's* man's self-complacency, argued that if she ("or any of her folks") took offense, he had but to take his pick among the other village belles; they would all be glad enough to get him.

"And what if the pistol shoots over?" queried Charley Green.

"It will not 'shoot over,' as you call it. You are not to look at the sights at all."

"Then what are we to do?"

"I'll show you. In the first place, remember that this practice is for firing rapidly from a galloping horse at a galloping buffalo. You've no time to look at sights, and could not keep them steady if you had. You must point the barrel directly at the target, and when the marks, the bullet is sure to go straight, too. Now please observe this target. It is made of a thick plate of steel and rings like a bell. It is just six inches square. If you hit it, you will hear the sound. If you miss it, the bank will teach you every time, moving back till you get the hang of it."

"But how are we to find our misses?" asked Moore.

"You don't want any misses. This kind of shooting is different from the other. You have only to hit a six-foot target from a distance of twenty or thirty feet at the utmost. You can begin at six feet if you like, and be sure to hit every time, moving back till you get the hang of it."

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